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## **REGENTS RECEIVE LOUISIANA EPAS RESULTS**

BATON ROUGE: The Louisiana Board of Regents has received the results from an academic and career assessment taken by more than 85,000 Louisiana eighth and tenth grade students. The Regents' sponsored project is aimed at providing students, parents and educators tools to identify career interest, academic strengths and weaknesses and the educational efforts and foundation necessary for students to meet their career goals.

ACT Officials say Louisiana's efforts are unprecedented. "We have worked with other states, but none have come to scale as quickly as this remarkable effort in Louisiana. This is an important project designed to help build human capital," said Don Carstensen, Vice President Educational Services, ACT, Inc.

Regents decided to offer the ACT instruments of Explore and Plan, both parts of the Education Planning and Assessment System (EPAS), because of a statewide effort to raise academic standards for college admission through the *Master Plan for Public Postsecondary Education*. While the Master Plan includes new admission standards for all four-year universities, Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie points out that Regents is focused on helping students meet the higher expectations.

(more)

## **ADD ONE REGENTS RECEIVE LOUISIANA EPAS RESULTS**

“We are focused on greater student access and increased student success. That means we need to provide clear expectations about the need for appropriate academic preparation to ensure college success. We plan to continue to stand in partnerships with the elementary and secondary community in providing assistance to help students meet their goals.”

According to ACT officials these instruments offer great long-term benefit for participants. “There is a basic disconnect among young people in understanding the need to put their nose to the grindstone through hard work in order to meet their future goals. One of the benefits of these assessments is that they clearly lay out the academic preparation necessary for a student’s given career interest. Students who have a sense of purpose and career direction are much more likely to stay the course and finish their educational objective, whatever that objective may be,” Carstensen said.

National research shows that students who take a college preparatory curriculum double their odds of college success and are less likely to need remedial education. However, research shows that in Louisiana 25% of the students who took the ACT had not taken the core courses necessary to prepare them for college. Efforts are underway through La EPAS, upcoming college Freshman Fairs and continued dialogue with local school officials, parents and students to ensure that there is greater awareness of the requirement for all students to take a college preparatory curriculum in order to be admitted directly from high school into a four-year university.

Statewide data shows that Louisiana student participants scored slightly below the national average on the Explore, Plan and ACT instruments. Regent’s officials hope to use this information as baseline data in order to track future student progress. There are hopes to continue this effort next year and to expand the reach of the program to the small percent of schools who did not volunteer to participate this year.